

DATeline: NEW YORK #128  
ROBERT L. REDEEN/N.Y.

NOVEMBER 10, 1976

RUN FOR YOUR LIFE  
(VOICED PIECE, INSERTS AVAILABLE IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: DATeline: NEW YORK ... PICTURES IN SOUND OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS IN AMERICA'S METROPOLIS AND BROUGHT TO YOU EACH WEEK (AT THIS TIME) BY THE VOICE OF AMERICA. THE CITY OF NEW YORK RECENTLY WAS THE SCENE OF A MARATHON RUN -- A RACE THAT SEEMS TO BE INCREASING IN POPULARITY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. AS LONG DISTANCE RUNNERS GATHERED TO ENTER THE RACE, A GROUP OF FOUR HUNDRED MEDICAL DOCTORS AND SCIENTISTS TOOK PART IN A CONFERENCE CALLED TO DISCUSS LONG DISTANCE RUNNING AND PHYSICAL FITNESS. VOA NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT ROBERT L. REDEEN SENT THIS REPORT.

VOICE: THOMAS BASSLER, A PATHOLOGIST FROM CALIFORNIA, TOLD THE MARATHON CONFERENCE THAT PEOPLE INTERESTED IN AVOIDING DEATH FROM HEART ATTACKS SHOULD BECOME MARATHON RUNNERS.

TAPE: CUT ONE -- BASSLER

"THE OLYMPIC MARATHON DISTANCE HAS BEEN WITH US FOR OVER SEVENTY YEARS AND THERE IS NO RECORD IN THE MEDICAL LITERATURE OF ANY MARATHONER EVER DYING OF A HEART ATTACK ANY TIME IN HIS LIFE AND THIS INCLUDES SOME FOLLOW-UPS FIFTY YEARS AFTER THEY'VE COMPLETED THEIR MARATHON."

VOICE: DR. BASSLER ADVISES NEW RUNNERS TO START THEIR TRAINING BY STOPPING THE PRACTICE OF SMOKING, MAINTAINING A NORMAL BODY WEIGHT, AND EATING A SENSIBLE DIET. HE SAYS THAT USUALLY MEANS A VEGETARIAN DIET WITH VITAMIN C AND E SUPPLEMENTS. THE INITIAL DISTANCE GOAL, HE SAYS IS TEN KILOMETERS A DAY. DR. BASSLER CONTENDS THAT JUST ABOUT ANYBODY, EVEN PEOPLE WITH HISTORIES OF HEART ATTACKS, CAN WARD OFF DEATH FROM

VOICE: FUTURE HEART TROUBLE BY FOLLOWING THESE PRACTICES.  
(CONT'D)

BUT THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MARATHON CONFERENCE, A NEW YORK  
BIOPHYSICIST NAMED PAUL MILVY, DISAGREED.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- MILVY

"I DON'T BELIEVE THE EVIDENCE IS IN. IT'S A VERY COMPLICATED  
SUBJECT, OF COURSE -- THE WHOLE PROBLEM OF WHAT IS CALLED  
'SELF SELECTION.' OBVIOUSLY, MARATHONERS ARE HEALTHIER TO  
BEGIN WITH THAN THE GENERAL POPULATION. IF YOU SMOKE  
FIVE PACKS OF CIGARETTES A DAY, IF YOU'RE FORTY POUNDS  
OVERWEIGHT AND IF YOU'VE HAD RHEUMATIC HEART FEVER WHEN YOU  
WERE SEVEN YEARS OLD YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BECOME A MARATHONER.  
SO THAT THE INCIDENCE OF HEART ATTACKS, THE INCIDENCE OF  
ALL KINDS OF DISEASE AMONG MARATHONERS IS LOWER THAN THE  
GENERAL POPULATION, BUT IT'S BY VIRTUE OF BEING A SELECT  
POPULATION TO BEGIN WITH."

VOICE: ANOTHER EXPERT AT THE RECENT CONFERENCE, DR. TERENCE KAVANAUGH  
OF THE TORONTO REHABILITATION CENTER, HAS BEEN INVESTIGATING  
THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE FOR HEART PATIENTS. MANY OF HIS  
780 PATIENTS DO NOT RUN THE FULL MARATHON DISTANCE, BUT  
THEIR DEATH RATE -- ONE POINT FOUR PERCENT A YEAR FROM HEART  
TROUBLE -- COMPARES MORE THAN FAVORABLY WITH DEATHS FROM  
HEART ATTACKS IN THE GENERAL POPULATION -- A RATE OF SIX TO  
TWELVE PERCENT.

AND AS IF TO POINT UP DR. BASSLER'S CONTENTION THAT MARATHON  
RUNNERS DO NOT DIE FROM HEART ATTACKS, A GROUP OF DR.  
KAVANAUGH'S PATIENTS TOOK PART IN LAST YEAR'S BOSTON  
MARATHON. ALL OF THEM HAD PREVIOUSLY SUFFERED HEART ATTACKS.  
NOT ALL OF THEM COMPLETED THE RACE, WHICH WAS RUN ON A VERY  
HOT DAY, BUT ALL OF THEM ARE WELL AND HEALTHY TODAY.  
THOMAS BASSLER AS A RESULT OF HIS STUDIES RECOMMENDS  
EXERCISING AT LEAST AN HOUR EVERY DAY.

TAPE: CUT THREE -- BASSLER

"A ONE HOUR INTERVAL OF EXERCISE ANY TIME DURING THE DAY WOULD MAKE ANYONE FEEL BETTER ALMOST INSTANTLY. IN ABOUT THREE MONTHS PEOPLE WHO ARE EXERCISING ONE HOUR A DAY -- WALKING OR JOGGING -- THEY BECOME SO HAPPY WITH THIS ONE HOUR THAT THEY RESIST ANYTHING THAT WOULD REMOVE IT AND THIS SIMPLE OBSERVATION HAS LED A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO DISAGREE WITH ME TO AGREE THAT THE ONE HOUR IS GOOD EVEN THOUGH THEY DISAGREE WITH THE MARATHON DISTANCE."

VOICE: THE DAY BEFORE THE SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE BEGAN, THE ANNUAL NEW YORK MARATHON TOOK PLACE... AND MOST OF THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS COMPETED. IT WAS ONE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTY MARATHONS CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES EACH YEAR. THESE DAYS, IT IS ESTIMATED, THERE ARE PERHAPS THIRTY THOUSAND PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES WHO CAN RUN THE MARATHON AND MAYBE SIXTY THOUSAND WHO CAN WALK ONE. AND AGE DOESN'T SEEM TO MATTER. DR. BASSLER RECALLED A RECENT RUN OF EIGHTY KILOMETERS IN WHICH HE WAS DEFEATED BY FOUR MEN ALL SIXTY-NINE YEARS OLD. THE CALIFORNIA PHYSICIAN SAYS THE PERSONALITY OF A MARATHON RUNNER BECOMES MORE AND MORE LIKE THAT OF A TEEN-AGER. HE'S HAPPIER, MORE PLAYFUL AND MORE STABLE IN TERMS OF THE PROBLEMS THAT COME TO THE MIDDLE-AGED.

DR. BASSLER FINDS THAT AS RUNNERS ARE ABLE TO COVER GREATER AND GREATER DISTANCES, THEIR BODIES SEEM TO BECOME YOUNGER THAN THEIR CHRONOLOGICAL AGES. HE NOTES THAT MEN OF FIFTY CHRONOLOGICALLY BECOME MEN OF FORTY PHYSICALLY AND MANY HEART PATIENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO MARRY, START NEW JOB CAREERS AND START NEW FAMILIES. BUT, DR. BASSLER SAYS, YOU'VE GOT TO KEEP UP YOUR RUNNING. FORTUNATELY, HE ADDS, HE'S NEVER MET A MARATHONER YET WHO COULD QUIT.

ANNCR: THIS HAS BEEN DATELINE: NEW YORK ... PICTURES IN SOUND OF  
PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS IN AMERICA'S METROPOLIS. TODAY,  
YOU'VE HEARD A REPORT BY VOA'S CORRESPONDENT ROBERT L.  
REDEEN ON THE NEW YORK MARATHON, LONG DISTANCE RUNNERS AND  
PHYSICAL FITNESS. JOIN US AGAIN NEXT WEEK (AT THE SAME TIME)  
FOR ANOTHER DATELINE: NEW YORK.

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